

originally filed papers were damaged as a result of the United States Postal Service irradiation process. Filed herewith is a complete and accurate copy of the originally submitted documents. Consideration of the cited references and return of the initialed PTO/SB/08A form are respectfully requested.

#### **Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102**

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3, 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0071475 A1 (Betzner *et al.*, hereinafter Betzner). The filing date of Betzner is December 7, 2000. Applicants have claimed foreign priority herein from German Patent Application No. 100 31 124.5-52, filed on June 30, 2000. In accordance with 37 CFR 1.55 and MPEP § 201.15, Applicants submit herewith an accurate and verified English translation of German Application No. 100 31 124.5-52. Since the present application is virtually an exact translation of the German priority application, but with amended claims, the priority application fully supports the present claims. Therefore, the present application should be accorded an effective priority date of June 30, 2000. As the priority date of the application predates the effective date of Betzner, Applicants respectfully submit that Betzner is not prior art relative to the current application under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Accordingly, Applicants request that the rejection of claims 1-3, 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) be withdrawn.

#### **Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103**

The Examiner has rejected claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Betzner in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,697,706 (Ciaravino *et al.*, hereinafter Ciaravino) and has rejected claim 5 as being unpatentable over Betzner in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,447,799 (Carlson). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

As indicated above, Betzner has an effective date later than the priority date of the present application, and does not qualify as prior art under 35 U.S.C. § 102 or § 103. Ciaravino alone does not disclose every element of claim 4. Carlson alone does not disclose every element of claim 5. Accordingly, a *prima facie* case of obviousness has not been made with respect to either claim 4 or claim 5, and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 4 and 5

under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) be withdrawn.

**CONCLUSION**

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application, including claims 1-7, is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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December 19, 2002 By: William W. Schwarze  
(Date)

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Enclosures